Amendments to the Specification

Please amend the paragraph on page 2 of the application at lines 9-18, as follows:

According to the invention, ~~a~~ an agitator assembly is provided within a transportation assembly of the automated immunoassay analyzer (e.g., a carousel, belt, chain, or other device which moves vessels between stations). The test vessel agitator assembly allows test vessels to be placed in and removed from the transportation assembly. While test vessels are being transported within the automated immunoassay analyzer via the transportation assembly, the test vessels are passively bumped by the agitator assembly, thereby agitating the contents. This agitation can occur when the test vessel contains a variety of different samples (e.g., blood, plasma, urine, serum, etc.), as well as a variety of other constituents such as diluted samples, reagent, assay bead and/or the like.

Please amend the paragraph on page 3 of the application, beginning at line 3, as follows:

Referring now to the drawings, and more particularly to Figure 1, which shows an automated immunoassay analyzer as a complex system with numerous subsystems that allow the tests to be performed without the continuous monitoring and intervention of a technician. The technician selects the tests to be performed for each sample and enters this information via the control subsystem 101. The control subsystem 101 manages the other subsystems by sending command and control information via the control bus 102. Samples of biological material (e.g., blood, urine, plasma, etc.) are placed by the technician in the sample subsystem 104. The samples within the sample subsystem 104 can be diluted prior to making measurements or can be tested in the undiluted state depending on direction from the control subsystem 101. The bead subsystem 105 adds the appropriate substrate

having a bound "analyte binding compound" to the test vessel. Preferably, the substrate is present in the form of one or more beads having adhered thereto a compound for binding the analyte of interest from the sample under test (e.g., via antigen-antibody binding, etc.). The reagent subsystem 103 adds the specified reagent to the test vessel. The selection of bead and reagent for each sample is managed by the control subsystem 101 based on the type of test to be performed on each sample. These subsystems include identification capabilities such as, for example, bar code readers or RF readers that read the bar code or RFID identification information on the reagent containers, bead containers and sample containers to ensure the correct components are added to each test vessel for testing. The test vessel is moved within the analyzer via the transfer subsystem 108. Once the selected components are added to the test vessel, the incubator subsystem 106 incubates and agitates the test vessel as managed by the control subsystem 101. The preferred incubator operation is described in more detail in the co-pending application, Multipath Incubator Serial No. 10/813,604 ~~10/___,___~~; however, it should be understood that this invention can be employed in numerous incubator and non-incubator applications (e.g., luminometer subsystem, or region prior to or after the incubator) depending on the design requirements for the vessel transportation assembly. The vessel is then washed and transferred via the transfer subsystem 108 to the luminometer subsystem 107. The luminometer subsystem 107 selects the test vessel and presents it to the detection mechanism. The luminometer operation is described in more detail in the co-pending application, "Rotary Luminometer," Serial No. 10/813,575 ~~10/___,___~~; however, it should be understood that this invention can be used in combination with a variety of devices that make readings on components within a test vessel (e.g., devices that read fluorescence, chemiluminescence, phosphorescence, and/or color). After the read operation is performed, the test vessel is discarded.

Please amend the paragraph on page 5 of the application, at lines 2-7, as follows:

The conveyor element 2, shown in Figure 3, preferably comprises multiple test vessel holders 6 attached together on a flexible belt 5. It is the belt 5 that is rotated around the mounting wheels 4 and the test vessel holders 6 that travel adjacent to the test vessel agitator 3. The number of test vessels, the holders 6, and the configuration of test vessel holders 6 can vary within the practice of this invention.